



Introduction

Introduction

As the Department of Justice's research, development, and evaluation agency, NIJ has always been a reliable source of the latest knowledge on criminal justice. In 2002, NIJ developed seven agency-wide strategic goals in three main areas: (1) creating knowledge and tools, (2) disseminating information, and (3) managing the agency's programs. The seven goals are:

- Partner with State and local practitioners and policymakers to identify social science research and technology needs.
- Create scientific, relevant, and reliable knowledge—with a particular emphasis on terrorism, violent crime, drugs and crime, cost-effectiveness, and community-based efforts—to enhance the administration of justice and public safety.
- Develop affordable and effective tools and technologies to enhance the administration of justice.
- Disseminate relevant knowledge and information in an understandable, timely, and concise manner.
- Act as an honest broker to identify the information, tools, and technologies that respond to the needs of stakeholders.
- Practice fairness and openness in the research and development process.
- Ensure professionalism, excellence, accountability, cost-effectiveness, and integrity in the management and conduct of NIJ activities and programs.

In addition to these strategic goals, NIJ identified 10 high-priority subject areas: law enforcement and policing; justice systems (sentencing, courts, prosecution, and defense); corrections; investigative and forensic sciences (including DNA); counterterrorism and critical incidents;

crime prevention and causes of crime; violence and victimization (including violent crimes); drugs, alcohol, and crime; interoperability, spatial information, and automated systems; and program evaluation.

These priority subject areas and strategic goals will help shape decisions about the scope of future work and the dissemination of NIJ-sponsored research, information, and technologies. At the same time, NIJ will maintain the flexibility to respond to emerging needs and to consider the merits of individual projects that may contribute to other worthwhile goals.

In 2002, NIJ also bolstered its commitment to program evaluation. The Bureau of Justice Assistance and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, sister agencies under the Office of Justice Programs, each developed an evaluation partnership with NIJ and transferred funds totaling \$5.3 million and \$5.8 million respectively for NIJ to design and procure outcome evaluations. The evaluations will help measure successes in programs, pinpoint shortcomings, and inform future efforts to develop similar programs.

NIJ redesigned its print and electronic products in 2002 as part of an intensified effort to make the knowledge it creates as relevant as possible to policymakers and practitioners. The redesign resulted in a format that emphasizes clear and concise writing with findings and implications stated up front. The redesign helps ensure that research is presented for targeted audiences in a user-friendly format.

NIJ will continue to provide objective, independent, evidence-based knowledge and tools to enhance the administration of justice and public safety. Its reorganization helps achieve this mission.